

No 2

*National Sins to be deplored by the Innocent
as well as the Guilty.*

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED in the Parish-Church

O F

G R E A T T O R R I N G T O N,

On *Sunday*, the Thirtieth Day of
January, 1742.

And now Published,

On Occasion of a late Pamphlet, intitl'd,
*The PRESBYTERIANS not chargeable
with King CHARLES's Death.*

By *SAMUEL JOHNSON*, A.M. *K*

Minister of the said Church.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. PARKER, at the *King's Head* in
St Paul's Church-yard; and sold by Mr JAMES
FLETCHER, Bookseller in *Oxford*. 1745.

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Printed for W. Parker, at the Xmas, West in
St Paul's Church-yard; and sold by Mr James
Firstman, Bookseller in Oxford. 1765.

S E R M O N

Preached in the Church of

of

GREAT TORRINGTON

On Sunday, the Twelfth Day of

January 1765.



On Occasion of a most singular incident
the presence of the King, CLARENDON, Bishop of
the King, CLARENDON, Bishop of

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, A.M.

Minister of the said Church.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. Parker, at the Xmas, West in
St Paul's Church-yard; and sold by Mr James
Firstman, Bookseller in Oxford. 1765.

P R E F A C E.

TH O' the following Sermon was designed for the Press one Time or other, it would not have been printed at this Time, had it not been for some new Attempts of the Dissenters, to vindicate themselves as to the Murder of the blessed King *Charles* the First. I wish with all my Heart they could fully clear themselves in this Respect: But as the Method they have now taken, will avail but little towards their Justification before God or Men; I have in this Discourse pointed out to them the only Method that can be effectual in this Case; and I am not without Hopes that some of them, at least, will be induced to comply therewith, especially when they shall perceive that

P R E F A C E.

that my Design is not to provoke, upbraid, or insult, but only to convince and perswade them for their own Good.

The Pamphlet aforementioned was, I find, first published in the Year 1717, but it was not my Fortune to see it before the last Publication about three Months ago; which I here take Notice of, in order to satisfy the Reader, that as this Sermon could not be intended for an Answer to that Pamphlet, so neither have I made any Alteration in it upon that Account, having, I presume, said enough beforehand to shew the Vanity of all such Vindications.

Wherefore

JONAH i. 14.

*Wherefore they cried unto the Lord,
and said, We beseech thee, O Lord,
we beseech thee, let us not perish for
this mans life, and lay not upon us
innocent blood: for thou, O Lord,
hast done as it pleased thee.*

TH E S E Words were spoken by
seafaring Men, that were Aliens
and Strangers from the Common-
wealth of *Israel*, and whose Oc-
cupation, as it exposes Men to the greatest
Dangers, so does it often teach them in what
Manner to apply themselves to God, on any
sudden or emergent Occasion. The Words
were delivered in the Time of a great Storm,
and on Occasion of casting *Jonah* into the
Sea, at his own Request, in order to lay the
Storm. *Jonah* was the most antient of all
the Prophets, that are distinguished by their
Writings as such. But though he was the
first in Order of Time, he has been thought
to be the last in Order of Dignity; some
B hating

having entertained a very mean Opinion of him *as a Prophet*. And 'tis very certain, that he was guilty of some great Failings, and grievous Offences, that lessen and obscure his Character: But then 'tis as certain, that he was endued likewise with some eminent Virtues and Qualities, among which (to mention no more at present) I cannot but take Notice of his free, voluntary, and generous Offer, to lay down his own Life, for the Preservation of the Lives of all those that were in the Ship with him. For when there arose a mighty Tempest in the Sea, so that the Ship was like to be broken, and they were all in great Jeopardy, and had cast Lots to know for whose Sake the Tempest was sent, and the Lot fell upon *Jonah*, upon further Inquiry he frankly told them the whole Truth, and that for his Sake this great Tempest was upon them; and then freely offered himself as a Ransom for them, advising them to take him up, and to cast him into the Sea, and assuring them, that thereupon the Sea would be calm. Now this generous Proposal of the Prophet, to be cast away for the saving of others, was an eminent Type of the Sacrifice of the Death of *Christ*, that great Free-Will Offering that was made upon the Cross for the Redemption of Mankind. 'Tis true, this is not commonly thought to be implied in the Prophecy of *Jonah*, nor is it mentioned by our Saviour
in

in his Application of this Part of that Prophecy to himself. The Prophet is only set forth in exprefs Terms, as a Type of his Burial and Resurrection. For *as Jonah was three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly, says our Lord, so shall also the Son of Man be three Days and three Nights, in the Heart of the Earth.* But tho' this only be mentioned, why might not the other Part of the History be intended as a Typical Representation of the *Death and Sacrifice*, as this was of the *Burial and Resurrection of Christ*? The Words of our Saviour, in the strict Sense, and taken by themselves, signify no more than his *Burial*; but yet as they refer to another subsequent Event, the Fish's casting out *Jonah* upon dry Land, they must be allowed to point at his *Resurrection*; and if they imply a subsequent Event, why may they not look back likewise to one preceding, *viz.* The Ground or Reason of his being cast into the Sea, which was his own mere Motion, and voluntary Offering? For he made the first Offer himself, and upon this Consideration, that if the Mariners cast him forth into the Sea, they would be safe, and the Sea would be calm. Thus, to all human Appearance, he freely and willingly exposed himself, for the Sake of others, to inevitable Death. And what could more lively typify the Free-Will Offering of *Christ*? 'Tis true, at last he did not *die*, neither was *Isaac slain*,

tho' his Father's Hand was lifted up to give the fatal Stroke, and yet was a signal Type of the Death of *Christ*; and so might the other, notwithstanding his miraculous Preservation, especially when 'tis considered, that that very Preservation was designed, as a Figure of a much greater Event, even of our Lord's rising again the third Day. When *Jonah* had made known his Case and Condition, and told the Men of his Country and Religion, of the God whom he served, and of the Occasion of his coming into the Ship, and had withal declared, that the only Way to save themselves from the Danger they were in, was to cast him into the Sea, the Mariners were at a Stand, and in a great Strait what to do. Being willing to save their own Lives, and unwilling to take away the Life of another, they tried once more what their Strength and Skill could do, and therefore *rowed hard to bring the Ship to Land*: But when they found that all their Endeavours were vain, and that *the Sea still wrought and was tempestuous*, they then implored the God of *Israel*, whose Servant *Jonah* professed himself to be, that this Act of theirs, which was neither voluntary, nor chosen by them, might not be imputed to them as a Crime. *Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this Man's Life, and lay not upon us innocent Blood: For thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.*

This

This Prayer is no other than the Voice of Nature, or the pure Dictate of Natural Religion, and what any Person, by the Light of Reason, without the Help of Revelation, might have been prompted to make. For to take away the Life of any Man, without an express or sufficient Warrant from just Authority, must appear, in the Eye of natural Reason, to be an unjustifiable and criminal Act. But the Case of the Mariners in the Text was otherwise; and yet they were not free from fearful Apprehensions of doing amiss. For tho' they had not only the Consent, but the Request of the Person that was to suffer; tho' they had Reason to believe him as a Prophet, and that he could not advise them to what was directly sinful and unlawful, especially in a Matter that concerned his own Life; tho' God himself likewise did, in some Measure, signify his Pleasure in this Case, by the casting of Lots, and suffering the Lot to fall upon *Jonah*, and by continuing the Tempest upon them, of all which they were sensible themselves, as they confess in the latter Part of the Text; and lastly, tho' to outward Appearance they must all have perished if they had not taken this Method, yet still they were afraid, and would not venture to proceed, before they had recommended themselves to the Mercy of God, and besought him not to lay upon them innocent Blood. Now such an Example
from

from *Mariners*, from *Heathens*, from *Strangers*, of so great an Averſion and Tenderneſs to take away the Life of another, notwithstanding the moſt weighty Conſiderations, that could well be urged for that Purpoſe, and of their great Readineſs to implore the Divine Mercy on that Account, is ſurely more than enough, not only to condemn thoſe barbarous Regicides, who made no Scruple to imbrue their Hands in the Blood of the Lord's Anointed, but likewise to ſhame and reprove thoſe of the Separation, who have hitherto reſuſed to join with us, in deprecating the Vengeance due to the Blood-Guiltineſs of this Day. From this remarkable Paſſage therefore, as now explained, I ſhall take Occaſion to lay before you theſe two Things.

Fiſt, I ſhall endeavour from hence to make ſome Eſtimate of the Greatneſs of that Guilt, which was contracted by ſhedding the Blood of the Royal Martyr, by comparing both Caſes together.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew, that 'tis the Duty of all the People of this Land, to deplore the Guilt, and deprecate the Judgments, that may juſtly be inflicted upon us, for this national and crying Enormity.

Fiſt,

First, I shall endeavour to make some Estimate from hence of the Greatness of that Guilt, which was contracted by the shedding the Blood of the Royal Martyr: And this must be done by a Comparison of the two Cases, whereby the Difference between them will evidently appear, particularly from the few following Considerations.

1. *Jonah* had been greatly disobedient unto God, and fled from his Presence, as unwilling, and resolving not to deliver the Message which God commanded him, and which properly belonged to his Office; at which the very Mariners expressed a great Surprise, when he told them of it, (ver. 10.) *Then were the Men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this?* And if the Prophet that denounced Evil against *Samaria*, was punished by God in an exemplary Manner, for hearkening to the Suggestions of a lying Prophet, contrary to the express Command of God himself, *that he should eat no Bread, and drink no Water in that Place* †; and if thereupon he had the Sentence of Death pronounced upon him, by the Mouth of the same Prophet that had deceived him, and at the same Table where he had transgressed, and a Lion soon after in the Way met him and slew him; if this Prophet,

† 1 Kings xiii. 9.

I say, was so signally punished for only suffering himself to be betrayed and deluded by a lying and false Spirit, how could *Jonah* hope to escape, who had been guilty of such a wilful, deliberate, and presumptuous Act of Disobedience? And therefore the Mariners, if they had had no other Reason, might have hoped to be excused, for vindicating the Cause of God, in casting his rebellious Prophet into the Sea: And yet we see how cautious and scrupulous they were in this Case, But was there any Thing like this in the Case of King *Charles the First*? He was so far from being disobedient to God, that he suffered for his Obedience to him. 'Twas his Zeal for Religion, that created him the greatest Opposition; 'twas his Stedfastness in the Faith, that raised him Enemies in the State; and his true Concern for the Church, that made him submit to die, rather than not defend it. He was likewise so far from fleeing from the Presence of God, as *Jonah* did, that he was forcibly driven from his own Palace and usual Place of Worship; made an Exile in his own Kingdom; constrained to wander like holy *David*, from Place to Place to find Refuge; pursued as a Partridge upon the Mountains; cut off from all personal Communication with his Royal Consort, his Parliament, and his Children: And when he could no longer shelter and secure himself from the Rebel-Army, he entrusted

entrusted his Person with those Men, who by the basest Treachery soon after set a Price upon his Head, and sold him into the Hands of those that sought his Life. At first he was in the keeping of the more moderate of the Party, but was soon ravished from them by the Hands of the Violent; who, when they had him, resolved to make short Work of it, and by taking off the King, to finish and compleat their long-projected Scheme of an impious Anarchy or tyrannical Aristocracy.

2. The Mariners in the Text were in the utmost Danger of their Lives. A mighty Tempest lay upon them, and they could neither by hard rowing bring the Ship to Land, nor hope to live long in the open Sea. Add to this, that *Jonah*, by his own Confession, was the Occasion of the Danger they were in, and that God sent this Tempest upon them, for his Sake or upon his Account, and that they could not be safe, but by casting him into the Sea: And yet they were still afraid to do it. How distant, how widely distant, was this from the Temper of those in this Nation, who first raised Storms and Tempests in the State, and then gave Occasion to the mournful Solemnity of this Day? And yet had the Face to charge all the Miseries and Misfortunes of those Times, upon that righteous King, as the *Heathens* used to charge the Primitive

C
Christians

Christians with all the Calamities that happened in the *Roman* State. But there were so many Trumpeters of Sedition and Rebellion in that Reign, and such furious ungovernable Spirits, that watched all Opportunities to raise Combustions, to distress and embarrass the King in all his Designs and Proceedings, and to widen the Breach between him and his People, that they seemed to aim at nothing less than to set all in a Flame. But suppose the King had been the Author or Occasion of the Troubles they complained of, could nothing satisfy them, or cool their Resentments, but the Effusion of his Blood, and depriving him of his Liberty, his Crown, and his Life? The Mariners would not offer the least Violence to a Man that endangered their own Lives, nor suffer a Hair of his Head to perish, till he himself constrained them to take this Method to pacify the Divine Indignation; and they had so far afterwards the Approbation of God for what they did, that the Storm immediately ceased, and the Sea was calm. But the Regicides of this Day plainly shewed by their horrid Deed, that they feared neither God nor Man, but acted according to the Extent of their usurped Power, making their Strength the Law of Justice, and, under Colour of removing one pretended Evil, involved the Nation in a Deluge of Wickedness and Calamity.

3. The

3. The Mariners proceeded with the greatest Deliberation, and with the greatest Reluctance in what they did, and would not at last comply with *Jonah's* Advice, of casting him forth into the Sea, before they had tried all other Means of Preservation, and not even then till they had implored the Mercy and Forgiveness of God, if they happened in this Case to be mistaken, or to do amiss. But the Actors in this Day's dismal Tragedy, plunged themselves head-long, and all at once, into the very Depths of Wickedness. The Fact indeed was too horrid and ghastly, to bear any such Thing as cool Reasoning, or serious Consultation; and tho' they erected what they called *An High Court of Justice* for the Trial of the King; yet even in this Sham-Court, and under this Mock-Authority, neither was the King permitted to speak for himself, nor would any Evidence have been admitted on his Side, if any such had dared to appear: So that they themselves, were both Accusers, Witnesses, and Judges, at the same Time, and in the same Cause. So far were they from consulting others, or acting with Caution in this Matter, that they used the most wicked Artifice to conceal their Design; and when that could not be done, they shut their Ears against the loud Cries of great Part of the Nation; were deaf to the earnest Remonstrances of the *Presbyterians*; to all

the Intercessions of foreign Ambassadors; to all the Importunities of their own Friends and Relations; and to the pressing Instances of their own General *Fairfax*; and had no Manner of Regard to their own former solemn Professions and Declarations. In short, when they were resolved to seize on the Inheritance, nothing could hinder them from destroying the Lord and Owner of it.

The Sum of what has been said in this Comparison, is this—The Mariners, after much Struggle with themselves, cast into the Sea one that was a perfect Stranger to them, but who had acknowledged that he had greatly offended his God, and greatly endangered them, by coming amongst them. The Regicides of this Day, threw their very Pilot over-board, and persecuted and destroyed not only the Lord's Anointed, and their own lawful King and Sovereign, but one like *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, a Man of exemplary Piety and heroick Goodness, a Father of his Country, and a true Lover of his People. The Mariners shewed a great Unwillingness and Averseness to the last, to cast *Jonah* into the Sea, tho' advised and desired by himself to do it. The Regicides went on in their black Design, in the most daring Manner, without any seeming Check or Remorse, and cut off a most righteous and gracious Prince,

Prince, tho' pressed on all Sides *not to do it*. The Mariners were in the utmost Peril of their Lives, and might have pleaded for themselves, that it was expedient that one Man should die, and that the whole Crew perish not; and yet could scarce prevail with themselves to make Trial of this Expedient, tho' it proved the happy Means of saving themselves and the Ship too. But the Regicides were in no Manner of Danger, and no Way necessitated to use any desperate Remedy: On the contrary, they had the Command of All, and then lorded it over three Kingdoms; and were so far from consulting the Peace and Safety of the Nation, or their own Security, in what they did, that they brought thereby utter Ruin and Desolation, and such an unmeasurable Load of Guilt, Infamy, and Misery, upon themselves and upon all the People, as has ministered but too just an Occasion ever since for serious Lamentation, and the most solemn Acts of Repentance and Humiliation. And this leads me to

The *Second* Thing to be considered, *namely*, The Duty incumbent on all the People of the Land, to deplore the Guilt, and deprecate the Judgments, that may justly be inflicted upon us, for the national and crying Sin of this Day. For national Sins call for national Judgments; and these can be prevented or averted, only by a national

tional Humiliation and Repentance. And that the Sin of this Day is to be reckoned the Sin of the whole Nation, may appear, among other Reasons, from considering the Person suffering, and the Persons offending.

As to the *Person suffering*. We are to remember that this was not a solitary or private Person, but the Head and Representative of the *whole Body politick*; and tho' some Limbs or Members may be taken off, without the Ruin or Demolition of the Body; yet here the Body itself was lost or killed in the *Head*, since one cannot survive the Destruction of the other. For 'tis the *Head* in the *political*, as well as the *natural* Constitution, that communicates Life, Vigour, and Spirits, to the several Parts: So that in destroying one they must necessarily destroy the other; and therefore, in this Case, we may truly and properly say, that a whole Nation was cut off at one Blow, and that Church and State fell with King *Charles the First*: Consequently with Respect to the *Person suffering*, this could be no other than a *national Sin*, which requires a national Humiliation; and there is no Person so pure or righteous, so free or exempt in this Case, who is not obliged to bewail the Guilt of it, and to deprecate the Vengeance that is due to it.

Then

Then with respect to the *Persons offending*. Tho' those more immediately concerned were but few in Number, no more, as it were, than a Handful of Men in Comparison of the rest; yet they assumed and acted in the Name of *all* the People of *England*, and afterwards by the Permission of Providence, usurped and exercised a Power and Authority, over the *whole Nation* for many Years together. Not to mention, that great Part of the Nation might be very blameable, in not being more vigorous and active, in opposing and endeavouring to hinder the Murder of their Sovereign. And no doubt the Sins of All, more or less, or some Way or other, contributed to the bringing down that heavy Judgment upon them.

But for the clearer Apprehension of this Matter, it will be necessary to distinguish here, between a *national Act*, and a *national Sin*. For 'tis certain that there may be a *national Sin*, when the outward Act which constituted the Sin, cannot strictly or properly be called national. Thus in the present Case, the Act itself was sudden and violent, short and transient, and committed only by a few abandoned Miscreants; but the Guilt of this Act is of a deep Dye, and of a lasting and extensive Nature, looking backward to many preceding Facts that opened and led the Way to it, and reaching forward

forward to all secret Likings and Approbations, as well as open Justifications of it; and so affecting many more Persons in both Ways, than can be known or well imagined, unless we could resolve all the Questions that may be raised upon this Point; among which I shall mention only this one that has been hinted before, *viz.* Whether the Neglect of the *Royalists* to interpose in their King's Behalf, in order to prevent his Murder, by a verbal Remonstrance at least, if they could not venture upon actual Force, might not be imputed to them by God, as a criminal Neglect, and bring them in as partly accessory to the Guilt of this Day? For my Part, I can't affirm that it will, nor can any one prove that it will not. I only observe, that in this and all other Cases of so heinous, publick, and complicated a Nature, there is a certain noxious Quality, that spreads itself all around, and threatens Infection to all that are within the Verge of it's Influence and Power. Or to illustrate this by another Comparison — Such publick and frightful Enormities that ripen by Degrees, and are compleated at last by a small number of Men, are like those dangerous *Indraughts* which Mariners have discovered in some Seas, and which they are so careful to avoid, the Force or Suction of which is in some Places of wide Extent, and endangers all Vessels that come within the

the Reach of it, tho' 'tis only the Centre or Whirlpool itself, that actually sinks and swallows them up. But to all this it may still be objected, that our wise Legislature seem to have had other Sentiments of this Matter; because 'tis said in the Act for appointing the Thirtieth of *January*, that *The fanatick Rage of a few Whiscreants stands charged by our Adversaries to the whole Nation.* To which I answer, that the Parliament could judge only of ~~the~~ *outward Act*, and that by this only Strangers and Foreigners ought to judge, and be determined likewise: And this was the Act *only of a few.* But who knows the Extent of it's Guilt, where it begins or where it ends, what previous and subsequent Facts may be comprehended under it, and how many Consciences have been defiled or affected by it? These are Things known only to God, and which the Laws and Judgments of Men, can never fully reach or penetrate. And yet if we consider the Strictness and Rigour of the Gospel of *Christ* in this Respect, which brings secret Hatred, and open opprobrious Language, within the Reach of the Sin of Murder †, we can't but fear that the Fact of this Day, was of a much more extensive Guilt, than is commonly supposed. But

† Matth. v. 21, 22. 1 John iii. 15.

however that be, and allowing that this was not a *national Act*, yet, for ought that appears to the contrary, it may truly and properly be called a *national Sin*, with respect to the *Persons offending*, as well as the *Person suffering*; which is all that I endeavour to prove. And this obliges to a national Humiliation, as it subjects all, without Exception, to the Visitation and Vengeance of the Almighty; so that tho' we are really or personally innocent, we ought to humble ourselves before God, and to act the Part of publick Penitents. For in this Case, we are to consider ourselves not as single Persons, but as Part of a Society, that has incurred the Divine Displeasure, and so are equally liable to the same Inconveniencies, Dangers, and Sufferings, with the other Parts; as all that sail in the same Vessel, run the same Hazard. Suppose then that they were but *few* to whom the Bloodguiltiness of this Day can strictly be imputed; yet there are Instances more than enough in Scripture, of God's punishing or threatening a whole People or Nation for the Sins of a very few, and sometimes only of single Persons. For to begin with the Instance in the Text, was not the Ship's Crew in Danger of perishing, for the Perverseness and Disobedience only of *Jonah*? And so likewise in the Days of *Joshua*, when *Achan* the Son of

of *Carmi* had committed a Trespafs in the accursed Thing, the Army of the *Israelites* could no longer stand before their Enemies, till they had humbled themselves by fasting and Prayer, and removed the accursed Thing, and punished the Transgressor *: Upon this God was reconciled to them, and made them again victorious over their Enemies. So likewise in the Days of King *David*, God sent a Famine upon the Land for some particular Crime, and when they enquired for what Cause it was sent, the Answer was, *It is for Saul and for his bloody House, because he slew the Gibeonites* †: And after the Sons of *Saul* were put to death for this, the Anger of the Lord was pacified, and this Judgment removed. So again, when *David* himself had sinned in numbering the People, God sent a Pestilence upon them to lessen their Number; and this Lessening would have been much greater, if he had not immediately, by the Direction of an Angel, built an Altar and offered Sacrifice: Then was God appeased, and the Plague was stayed ||. Once more; That heinous Wickedness of the Men of *Gibeab*, in relation to the *Levite's* Concubine, was punished by God in a most exemplary Manner, by cutting off almost one whole Tribe from *Israel*, the

* Josh. vii.

† 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

|| Ibid. xxiv.

Tribe of *Benjamin*, for conniving at and not punishing the Offenders, when required by their Brethren so to do †. And that which still comes nearer to the present Case, the Day on which *Gedaliah* the Son of *Abikam* was murdered, whom the King of *Babylon* had made Governor over the Remnant of the *Israelites* that were left in the Land of *Judea*, after he had carried the rest away captive to *Babylon*; this Day, I say, was afterwards religiously observed for many Years with Fasting and Humiliation, and was called the Fast of the seventh Month. Nor do we want the Examples of *Heathens* in this Case, or with respect to the Obligation of humbling ourselves, as particularly of the Mariners in the Text, who, when they cast *Jonah* into the Sea, at his Desire, but against their own Will, implored the Divine Clemency, and prayed God that he would not lay upon them the Guilt of innocent Blood. Thus does God send us to the *Heathens* to learn Instruction in this Point, and lets us see, by their Example, how far the Light of Nature, when left to itself, would direct Men in such Cases. And are not all these Instances sufficient to convince our *Dissenting Brethren* of their Obligation in this Respect? Especially if they consider, as they

† Judg. xx.

ought, that their Forefathers might have no small Share in the Guilt of this Day, as they all along sided with those that opposed the King. And tho' afterwards some of them repented, when it was too late to stop the fatal Blow, and protested and remonstrated against taking away the King's Life; yet neither just after his Death, nor at any other Time ever since, have they, by any publick or solemn Act of Humiliation, testified their Abhorrence of that execrable Fact, or prayed God that the Guilt of that innocent Blood might not be laid to their Charge. I wish they would seriously consider this, for their own Sake, and for the Nation's Sake. 'Tis to no Purpose for them to say, that they cannot think themselves obliged to lament a Sin, that was committed so many Years ago; since God has so peremptorily declared, that he will visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children to the *third* and *fourth* Generation: And therefore a Sin committed an hundred Years ago, is the very same in his Sight, as one that was committed but yesterday, if not repented of and atoned for. Were there Grounds for any Doubt or Scruple in this Matter, God himself has taken Care to remove all such, by giving very plain and positive Directions in something of a like Case. *If one be found slain in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the Field, and it be not known who hath slain him*

him †. In this Case God directs, in the following Words, that the Elders of the City next to the Slain, shall bring down an Heifer into the Valley, and there strike off his Neck, and afterwards wash their Hands over him, and then use this solemn Form of Protestation and Deprecation. *Our Hands have not shed this Blood, neither have our Eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy People of Israel, whom thou hast redeemed; and lay not innocent Blood unto thy People of Israel's Charge.* And then 'tis said, *The Blood shall be forgiven them*; which plainly shews, that the Guilt of such Blood, tho' they were no Way accessary to the shedding of it, would still lie upon them, and subject them to the divine Visitation or to temporal Judgments, till they took this Method to clear themselves, and to pacify the Anger of the Almighty. And can any Thing be plainer or more express, or fuller to the Purpose, than this Injunction? But perhaps 'twill be said, that this is only a *Ceremonial* Law, and no Way binding to us. But we should consider, that there is a great deal of *Morality* in some of these Ceremonial Precepts, and 'tis the Duty of Christians to separate one from the other. The only *Ceremonial Part* here (which is likewise very significant) is killing the Heifer in the Manner prescribed, and washing the Hands over him: But praying that innocent Blood whenever it

† Deut. xxi. 1.

is shed, may not be laid to our Charge, or visited upon us, is a moral and religious Duty, highly proper and expedient, if not indispensably necessary, as any serious Man would be apt to think, that duly considers the Strictness and Peremptoriness of the Divine Purpose to make Inquisition for Blood, as delivered by God himself to *Noah* and his Sons just after the Flood. *Surely your Blood of your Lives will I require ; at the Hand of every Beast will I require it ; and at the Hand of Man, at the Hand of every Man's Brother will I require the Life of Man* †. When God reproved *Cain* for this Sin, he told him, *That the Voice of his Brother's Blood cried unto him from the Ground* ||. Here innocent Blood, when shed, is said to have a *Voice*, and that Voice to be a *crying one*, and that Cry to reach from Earth to Heaven, and to call down Vengeance from thence. And therefore God commanded the *Israelites* to use the Method beforementioned, both for discovering the Guilty, and to open a Way for him to shew Mercy to the Innocent, who would otherwise have stood exposed to, and lain within, the Reach of his Judgments, when he came to visit for that Sin. But by observing this Method, they cleared themselves both from Guilt and Punishment. Now the Reason of the Thing is still the same. *Bloodguiltiness* subjects even the *innocent* Part of Mankind, *Christians* as well as *Jews*, to a Visitation from God ; and

† Gen. ix. 5.

|| Ibid. iv. 10.

therefore

therefore something of the like Means will be necessary for our Security as was for their's, or in order to avert the impending Stroke from our own Heads. And if we refuse Compliance with this, on Pretence of our own *personal Innocence*, (tho' with Respect to the *Community* upon which such Guilt is chargeable, there is *none* to be esteemed *innocent*, *no*, *not one*) we do thereby render ourselves really guilty, or justly obnoxious to the Vengeance of God, and do what in us lies to endanger the Safety of the whole Community, which is generally the same in one Age, as in another. For Nations, States, and Kingdoms, while they continue in a Way of Succession, are no other than larger Families, and God considers and deals with them accordingly; that is, he looks upon every Nation or Kingdom as still one and the same, tho' in a continual Flux, or made up of a Succession of different Members, even as a River is always the same, tho' the Waters thereof are continually changing. And therefore tho' we are removed at so great a Distance from the bloody Fact of this Day, we are still the same People in the Eyes of God, and liable to the same Judgments that our Forefathers were, unless we take Care to prevent them, by observing the Method which God has prescribed; that is, by joining in a publick and national Humiliation; which (whatever our Fathers may have suffered on this Account thro' their own Neglect, or our Children may hereafter suffer upon the same) will be our best Fence,

and

himself

himself excused from, or not included in, the general Obligation? 'Tis God's express and positive Command, (and has been the Practice of *Jews* and *Heathens*) when any innocent Blood is shed, for Men to humble themselves before him, and to implore his Mercy for the same. For *Blood defileth the Land* †, and is one of those Abominations that are said to spue out the Inhabitants ‡, and is not to be expiated but by the Blood of the Offender ||, or by solemn Prayer and Humiliation. We see what a long Train of Evils has attended the shedding of the Blood of *Christ*, and that horrid Imprecation of the *Jews* upon themselves and their Posterity, *His Blood be on us and upon our Children*. And so it has been with a Vengeance. For this *one* Sin they have now lien under the Curse of God for near *seventeen hundred* Years together; and yet for all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is still stretched out against them. And we have Reason to fear that the Blood of our martyred Sovereign is not yet fully atoned for, nor ever will be, till we are more *united* and more earnest in deprecating the Vengeance of Heaven on that account. I wish those that are not a little concerned in this Matter, were now present to hear me; because 'tis not out of any Ill-will, or with a Design to upbraid or reproach them, but from a true Affection and Concern for them, that I speak this. Their joining with us in performing the solemn Office appointed

† Numb. xxxv. 33.
xix. 10, 13.

‡ Lev. xviii. 28.

|| Deut.

for the *Thirtieth* or *Thirty-first* of *January*, would be a likely Means to remove the Judgments of God from us, and might help to procure many and great Blessings to this Nation. And why should they any longer withstand so desirable an End, so blessed an Union? Their past Neglect might be owing to Ignorance, or Prejudice, or Want of Consideration. Their future Compliance will shew that this Neglect of theirs did not proceed from a Spirit of Obstinacy, Opposition, or Contempt; or if it did in any Measure, that they have since laid it aside. And as they now occasionally attend upon the Service of our Church on other Days, it were much to be wished, that for the future they would constantly attend upon this. And may God in his Mercy incline them to so wise and pious a Resolution, that makes so much for their own Peace, and the Peace and Prosperity of this suffering Nation.

In the mean while, let none of our Communion, that have Opportunity and are able to attend, absent themselves from this anniversary Solemnity, for which a most pious and pathetic Office is provided, suited to the mournful Occasion, and full of the Doctrine contained in the Text; in which the Language is so moving and instructive, and the several devotional Parts so solemn and edifying, that no Man who has any true Sense of Piety, would willingly deprive himself of the Benefit of so useful and religious a Service. It is indeed both a Service and a Sermon, and sufficient to supply the Defects of
all

all the Sermons that have been, or shall be delivered on the Occasion.

Since then our Church has taken such abundant Care to instruct her Children in the Duty and to obtain the Mercy and Pardon of God for the crying Provocation of this Day: And since we know not how far our Forefathers proceeded, or what Degree of Guilt they might contract in this Case, it will become us to comply with the pious Orders of the one, and to humble ourselves for the Iniquities of the other, that so we may not be involved in the Guilt of *Royal Blood*, nor partake of the Punishment which may otherwise (in a publick and national Way) be justly inflicted on us for the Sins of those Times. By this Means we shall have a well-grounded Hope and Confidence, that the Violence and Outrage committed against the sacred Person of the blessed King *Charles the First*, will not be required of us or our Posterity, and that our Land will at last be freed from the Vengeance of his righteous Blood, and God be glorified in the Forgiveness of our Sins, through the Merits and Intercession of his only Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord;

To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty, Obedience, and Thanksgiving, now and for ever. Amen.

F I N I S